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ABSTRACT

This report describes an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Oklahoma City Public Schools' Even Start Family Literacy Project (ESFLP). The ESFLP sought to: (1) improve parents' basic literacy and employment skills; (2) enable parents to take a teaching-guiding role with their children; (3) encourage parents to become true partners with schools in their children's education; (4) enhance parental skills so that parents can help their children learn when school is not in session; (5) provide an effective early childhood program that fosters a delight in learning and a positive self-image; and (6) provide referrals to community and city agencies for a variety of services. The evaluation procedure used parent and student interviews, questionnaires, and various objective measures of program outcomes. The basic characteristics of the population served are examined, and the effects of the ESFLP on parents' views of themselves as learners and parents are discussed. The report also explains how the early childhood education component affected the children in the program. The report notes that, overall, the ESFLP had a very positive effect on the parents and children who participated in it. (MDM)

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**EVEN START FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAM EVALUATION
OKLAHOMA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
1992-93**

June 30, 1993

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**Oklahoma City University Evaluation Team
Division of Education**

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**Oklahoma City Public Schools
Even Start Family Literacy Program**

**Oklahoma City University Evaluation Team Report
1992-93**

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**OKLAHOMA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EVEN START FAMILY LITERACY EVALUATION PROJECT**

I. OVERVIEW

The local evaluation for the Oklahoma City Even Start Education Program has been conducted by the Oklahoma City University's Division of Education. The evaluation activities have been extended beyond the national Even Start Program's evaluation information system with a major focus on identifying the current strengths and weaknesses in the program for the purpose of improving the programs practices and procedures. Long range goals are to develop a model for national replication. The evaluation activities have been conducted over the past eight months.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATION PROJECT

The evaluation consisted of two major components. The first component was to support and summarize the data collected from the variety of instruments developed by the National Evaluation Information System (NEIS). The second component was developed by the local Evaluation Team (ET) to expand beyond the national evaluation in order to identify the dynamics that existed in the program developed by the Oklahoma City Public Schools Even Start Education program.

The Evaluation Team (ET) consists of four members:

- * The Administrator and Director of the project, Dr. Donna Castle Richardson, has monitored and directed the organization and development for each phase of the evaluation project. Dr. Richardson completed the follow-up evaluation on the children who spent a minimum of one year in the program and are currently enrolled in public and parochial schools in the Oklahoma City area. The Director and Associate Director worked together as a team to complete the written summary of the report and the application for the National Diffusion Network.

- * Associate Director, Deborah Papesh, conducted the on-site testing administration, home visit evaluation component and observations of the literacy and play instrument. She supervised the Spanish speaking examiners and worked closely with them in evaluating the Spanish speaking population. She refined the literacy and play instrument. She developed programs for generating computer reports for statistical analysis. She entered all raw data in the computer for report purposes. The March data report was compiled and published by Deborah. In addition, careful analysis and recommendations were made from the testing results then reported to the teachers.
- * Denise Binkley, a research assistant from the 1991-92 evaluation team was selected to interview the graduates of the program. She collected the data and summarized the information.
- * Spanish speaking examiners, Eli Franco and Magdalena Herrea, completed on-site testing with the Spanish speaking population when needed.

The Evaluation Team has generated and interpreted reports and performed statistical analyses on the data collected for the 1992-93 evaluation project. Data from the 1991-92 report will be added to the National Diffusion Network application to provide relevant information for program analyses requested within the Program Effectiveness Panel (PEP) guidelines. In addition, the ET has summarized the additional data collected from the pre and post evaluation instruments. The final evaluation report was completed in June of 1993. The Oklahoma City University ET began the evaluation project the second full year of the project's operation. The team is currently completing its second year as the evaluator. The first year evaluations were completed by Oklahoma City Public Schools. The scope of the program evaluation project has consisted of the following activities:

1. Summarizing the data collected on site by the Even Start staff for the National Assessment of the following instruments:
 - a. Form IB: Parent-Child Interaction & Parent As a Teacher
 - b. Daily Log of Core Services
 - c. Adult Pre & Post CASAS test results
 - d. Test de Vocabulario en Imagenes Peabody
 - e. National Attendance Logs
 - f. Participant Characteristic Intake
 - g. Parenting Education Pre/Post Test
 - h. NEIS Part III: Program Implementation
2. Administering and entering data from the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test Revised (PPVT-R).

4. Assisting the Even Start Program supervisor with developing the documentation required by the National Even Start Evaluation on December 15, 1992 and June 15, 1993.
5. Going beyond the basic data to focus on: a) changes on the part of parent participants with respect to educational aspirations, outlook, use of services, and job goals; b) changes in literacy and social behavior of 2-3 and 4-5 age groups; c) follow-up interviews with program graduates; d) interviews with program participants; e) examined home environments and changes that occurred during the period of services; f) interview teachers currently teaching children who completed a minimum of one year in the Even Start program before entering kindergarten and g) program elements which enhance achievements of program's stated goals.
6. Designing an evaluation plan appropriate for the fine-tuning of a model program which can be included in an application to the National Diffusion Network and included in the renewal application.
7. The 1991-92 final report was included in the grant renewal application for 1993-94.
8. Writing a final evaluation report which will include analyses of all pre and post assessments, observations and interviews.
9. Writing an application for submission to the Program Effectiveness Panel (PEP) for proposed dissemination funds from the National Diffusion Network.

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE EVEN START EDUCATION PROGRAM

In 1988 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 was amended by the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments which authorized the Even Start program. According to the law the Even Start program is intended to:

".....improve the educational opportunities of the Nation's children and adults by integrating early childhood education and adult education for parents into a unified program...The program shall be implemented through cooperative projects that build on existing community resources to create a new range of services."
(P.L. 100-297, Sec. 1051).

The Even Start program has been developed to incorporate a wide variety of innovations from successful programs for adult basic education, parenting education and early childhood education. The

program is to focus on three interrelated goals:

- * to help parents become full partners in the education of their children;
- * to assist children in reaching their full potential as learners; and
- * to provide literacy training for their parents.

The Even Start Education program in Oklahoma City has implemented the three interrelated goals by providing a variety of instructional components. Even Start is a family literacy program conducted by the Oklahoma City Public Schools in six school areas: Polk, Stand Watie, Rockwood, Mark Twain and Pierce. In each of these areas, the program provides unique services to a maximum of 45-46 families.

The Oklahoma City Public Schools Family Education Program is designed to increase the educational level of disadvantaged parents and children through the following means:

- * By improving the basic literacy and employment skills of parents so they can achieve economic, education and social goals. Parents are provided with GED preparation classes, individual literacy tutors and ESL classes three times a week.
- * By allowing parents to have a teaching-guiding role that will increase their own self-esteem as parents and teachers of their young children.
- * By working together with parents and their preschool children in a school setting to encourage parents to become true partners with schools in children's education. Parents participate in weekly Parent/Child Interaction Groups.
- * By enhancing parental skills so parents can help their children learn when school is not in session. This is achieved during a weekly parenting discussion group, and a Home Visit twice a month.
- * By showing parents how to make education a primary value in the home. This is achieved during a Home Visit twice a month.
- * By providing an early childhood program that fosters a delight in learning, positive self-image and encourages social, cognitive, emotional and physical development while parents attend adult education sessions.
- * By providing referral to community and city agencies for a variety of needed services.

Transportation is provided for the parents and children to come to the Westwood Center. Also, free adult and children's meals are provided on site through a joint effort by Oklahoma City Public Schools and Southwestern Bell Telephone Company. During the Spring of 1992 an Adult Literacy program has been added one night a week to include the employed adult males. This is in collaboration with the Oklahoma Literacy Council.

IV. EVEN START EDUCATION PROGRAM DESIGN AND OPERATION

The Even Start program in Oklahoma City is in Cohort I which identifies it as one of the programs which was appropriated funds during the first year of the national project. The program design was developed and has been revised to meet the needs of the individuals enrolled in the program. The weekly operation of the program includes a diverse offering of services to meet the unique needs of the families. The major elements of the Even Start Education Program are:

Adult Basic Education

1. Pre-GED and GED Classes. The purpose of this program component is to provide individualized and group instruction to meet the learning needs of the adult population. Three adult educators provide classroom instruction for program participants. Tutors from the Literacy Council and other volunteer tutors in various subject areas provide individualized instruction for students who need additional assistance. An interactive instructional model is used to introduce content and skills. For example, a large group lesson consists of a directed instructional lesson which leads to monitored activities in cooperative learning groups which provide practice in the skills or concepts. Instructional materials are developed that lead the cooperative learning group into interactive learning. In addition the second period of instruction is used to provide learning center activities which incorporate meaningful life experiences while developing skills and concepts. The curriculum is presented through self-selected centers and students choose areas that help to enhance learning components as outlined by the diagnostic tool, such as the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System.

The curriculum includes core classes in math, reading and writing. Also, included in curriculum are social studies, sciences, literature and geography. A major focus of the instructional period is spent in motivational activities which make learning relevant to the student's everyday experiences. The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) in Reading and Math skills is used as a pre and post assessment tool with the successful completion of the GED as the major goal for the academic content. By assessing the areas of lifestyle learning as completed by the student, the teachers are able to diagnose deficient academic

building blocks as well as assess areas of strength.

2. ESL Classes. These classes are designed to provide Pre-GED and GED preparation for Spanish speaking adults. This aspect of the program has a major emphasis in teaching English and the basic skills. The CASAS in Reading, Math and Listening is used for pre and post testing. On-site tutoring is available from literacy volunteers, and the class curriculum is also a self-selective environment with a major emphasis on life skills application.

Parent Education Component

1. Parenting Discussion Groups. One day a week the students participate in a parenting discussion group. Current issues on parenting strategies and specific areas of interest are discussed in an open-discussion format, with a strong emphasis on utilizing the other parents as resources and problem-solvers. Another strategy utilized for parent instruction was encouraging parents to reflect upon their experiences in Playgroup. The group facilitator also focuses on the awareness of the whole child: that a child develops socially, cognitively, physically, and emotionally.

2. Home Visits. An important concept developed during home visits is the parent as the child's first teacher. The home visitor takes books and makes use of existing materials in the home to create educational games and activities. Many of the parents use a portion of their adult class time to construct learning material for the child. Through modeling, home visitors demonstrate appropriate parenting strategies. Children's literature is also an important element of the home visit with the home visitor modeling the reading process by reading a book during each home visit.

The home visitor also acts as a child development resource in the home, offering advice and practical guidelines to common child development questions. A trusting relationship also develops that allows the home visitor to recommend outside existing social services should the need arise.

3. Play Group. The playgroup is conducted during an hour and one-half period each week when the parent attends the preschool class in which their child is currently participating. If the parent has a second child, they spend an additional hour and one-half in the preschool setting with the second child. This program is designed to provide an early childhood lead teacher as the educational model for responsive interactions and educational experiences while the parents are integrated into the classroom environment.

Early Childhood Education Component

1. **Preschool/Early Learning.** Children are divided into three multi-age preschool groups. The younger group consists of infants to two year-olds. The two and three year-olds are in another class, and three year-olds who have birthdays after September 1 are placed in the older preschool class. The older preschool class has children ranging in age from three to five. When children are ready for kindergarten, they enter one of the six designated elementary schools.

2. **The Home Visit.** The home visit is designed to provide the preschool child with an informal educational experience with an early childhood trained teacher in the home. The teacher models for the parent appropriate developmental tasks to be used with their child or children, then the parent participates as the teacher. Literacy materials are an important component in the program.

3. **Play Group.** During an hour and one half period once a week, the preschool classroom changes focus and becomes an early childhood environment that provides learning experiences for both parents and children, with early childhood educators as models for developmentally appropriate practices. Parents and children work together with a teacher who models appropriate activities as well as responses toward young children.

PROCEDURE FOR EVALUATION

The framework for conducting the evaluation project commencing in October 1991 has been designed by the Oklahoma City University Evaluation Team (ET) to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Oklahoma Even Start Family Literacy program components. The evaluation project was completed in June of 1993.

The design includes the purpose of the study which outlines the questions to be answered. The sources of data section explains the data collection instruments to be used. A summary of methods utilized to collect both qualitative and quantitative data follows. Major methodologies includes observations, questionnaires, standardized instruments, written records, and the National Evaluation Information System (NEIS) forms. The data analysis summarizes the results of the data collection. The final section of the written report consists of the conclusions and recommendations. The details of the data summary can be found in the appendix.

I. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The Even Start Education Program in Oklahoma City is in its third full year of operation. The Oklahoma City University Evaluation Team started the extensive evaluation program during the second complete year of the project.

The purpose for the evaluation has been to answer the following questions which have been divided into four major categories:

1. What are the basic characteristics of the population?
- * What are the characteristics of the population being served by the program?
- * What is the retention rate of the population being served?

2. How has the program affected the adults' view of themselves as learners toward employment, basic life and literacy skills?
 - * What changes have resulted in the basic life skills of the graduates of the program?
 - * What effects has the program had on the literacy and employment skills of the adult participants?
 - * How has the adults view of themselves as a learner changed as a result of involvement in the program?
3. How has Even Start affected the adults' view of themselves as parents?
 - * Has the program had any effect upon the participants' parenting skills?
 - * Has the program had a positive effect upon the family unit?
 - * Has the home environment improved as a result of the Home Visits?
4. How has the early childhood education component affected the young children in the program?
 - * What are the effects of ES on children's school readiness?
 - * What impact has the program had on the social, language and literacy skills of the children?
 - * What longitudinal effects has the program had on preschool graduates as they leave the program and enter other educational settings?

II. SOURCES OF DATA

The data collection has been conducted using a variety of methods. The program participants and staff were the primary subjects from which data was sought. Another source of basic information was the participant data from the NEIS report. The evaluation has gone beyond the basic national program requirements to include a variety of activities aimed at determining the program's impact on the parents' literacy, home environment, parenting skills, and overall changes in attitudes. In 1993, an additional component was added to identify the longitudinal progress of the preschool graduates as they entered into public and private educational settings. Changes in the young children's development in literacy, language, play (social) and school readiness were essential evaluation considerations.

The following instruments were used to extend the evaluation project:

1. The Caldwell Home Inventory (HOME) was used to evaluate the home environment. The HOME was designed to identify the quality of the environmental stimulation during the child's early life and subsequent development. The observation instrument was designed for screening. The items in the preschool inventory include the following subscales: (1) Stimulation Through Toys, Games and Reading Materials; (2) Language Stimulation; (3) Physical Environment; (4) Pride, Affection and Warmth; (5) Stimulation of Academic Behavior; (6) Modeling and Encouraging of Social Maturity; (7) Variety of Stimulation; and (8) Physical Punishment. The HOME instrument designed for infants and toddlers includes: (1) Emotional and Verbal Responsivity of Parent; (2) Acceptance of Child's Behavior; (3) Organization of Physical and Temporal Environment; (4) Provision of Appropriate Play Materials; (5) Parent Involvement with Child; and (6) Opportunities for Variety in Daily Stimulation.

2. The Social Interaction and Language/Literacy Observation Scale was developed by the Evaluation Project Director in cooperation with the Even Start Family Program Supervisor. The Associate Director was trained to observe and collect the data. The instrument was designed to be used as an observation instrument to label children's literacy, language and play interaction. The first component of the observation focused for ten minutes on the Language and Literacy Scale designed to observe infants through two years or three to five years olds. This scale was divided into two basic overall age groups because of the diverse changes that occur during the first five years in both language and literacy.

The second component of the observation focused for ten minutes on young children's play and interaction behavior between peers and adults in an early childhood classroom setting.

3. The Gordon Personal Profile (GPP) was administered individually to parents participating in the program. A Spanish speaking interpreter was used to aide in the testing of the Spanish speaking participants. "The Gordon Personal Profile provides a simply obtained measure of four aspects of personality that are significant in the daily functioning of the normal person, namely Ascendancy, Responsibility, Emotional Stability and Sociability. In addition, the Profile yields a measure of Self-Esteem based on the sum of the four trait scores" (Gordon, 1978:1).

4. A Graduate Questionnaire was developed by the Even Start Evaluation Project Director with the cooperation of the Even Start Family Program Supervisor. The purpose for using the questionnaire was to identify the changes which have resulted in the basic life skills of the graduates of the program.

5. A Participant Questionnaire was written by the Even Start Evaluation Project Director in collaboration with the Even Start Family Program Supervisor. The questions were developed to identify the participants' perspective of the program and its overall effects on their family and literacy skills.

6. Follow-up Interviews on Preschool Graduates was written by the Evaluation Team Director and Associate Director in consultation with the Even Start Family Supervisor. The evaluation instrument consisted of seventeen questions covering three major categories: (1) Academic Performance; (2) Prediction for School Success and (3) Parental Support and Participation. The Category of Academic Performance consisted of five subareas: literacy, social awareness, emotional development, physical development, and language development. The teachers were asked to rank each child in the class by the criteria of excellent, above average, average, and below average. The administration of the test took approximately 30 minutes depending on the number of the children being evaluated in the classroom.

7. The National Evaluation Information System requires the following testing data required for the Even Start Family Literary programs.

a. Peabody Picture Vocabulary was selected for the national evaluation project to be administered by each Even Start project nationally. This standardized test gives a receptive language or vocabulary that provides a estimate of the child's verbal ability and literacy-related skill. There are 175 vocabulary items on the test listed by increasing difficulty. The examiner reads a word and the child selects the word from four pictures. The test is written in Spanish (TVIP); norm groups are Hispanic.

b. The Preschool Inventory (PSI) was used to measure school readiness. The test is written in both Spanish and English. The test compares Even Start children to the performance of other disadvantaged children but does not have national norms.

c. The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) tests student's ability to apply basic skills to "real life" situations. This instrument was used to evaluate the Adult Basic Education component of the program. The test was administered during the adult education classes and the data was used by the evaluation team to compare students progress toward literacy. Also, the number of adults who passed the GED were summarized to demonstrate students' progress.

d. The National Evaluation Information System Forms from the NEIS project were summarized to finalize the report. Information has been selected for the written report which answers questions for the purpose of the study. The tabulated summary of the following reports have been added to the appendix for additional information.

The following forms for both the December and June reporting periods have been summarized in the appendix:

- Form IB Part A: Participant Characteristics at Intake
- Form IB Part B: Parent Child Interaction Parent as Teacher
- Form II: Daily Log of Core Services to Families
- Form IV: Record of Adults and Child Outcome Data

III. DATA COLLECTION

The methodology for data collection included a wide variety of techniques. The basic instruments required by the National Even Start Family Literacy Program through NEIS created the core information for the research. The Evaluation Team added standardized instruments, interviews, observations instruments and questionnaires which provided additional information to measure the total program components.

The following procedures were used to collect the data:

1. Caldwell Home Inventory

The Associate Director of the evaluation project visited the homes of each of new entering participants during the 1992-93. The Associate Director completed the HOME observations and interviewed each parent to obtain the necessary information required to complete the Caldwell Home Inventory. The homes were visited within the first six weeks of attendance in the program and again in April and May of 1993.

2. Social Interaction and Literacy Observation Scale

Initial observations of the target children began in September 1992. Each target child was observed during the Early Learning component of the program. The Associate Director observed the target children for a 60 second sweep then recorded during the next 30 seconds. The observation then continued for a total of 20 minutes with a 10 minute focus on social interaction and a 10 minute focus on the literacy skills of each child. The pre-observations consisted of the twenty-two new children with twenty-three children in the post-observation. There was a loss of three children during the year and a gain of four from families entering in the fall. In addition the post-observations were completed on the total preschool population which included returning preschoolers from previous years. Specifically, observations were conducted within the area of social interaction (e.g. solitary, associative, parallel, cooperative, functional, etc.). Observations conducted within the area of language and literacy

development were divided into two age groups; Birth to age 2 and Ages 3 to 5. The form for Birth to age 2 identified nonverbal, one word, holophrase, telegraphic, two words, and imitative language. The form Ages 3 to 5 observed language and literacy based upon the seven functions of language outlined by Joan Tough (1985). Running records were kept on children's speech. Areas of play and language were evaluated based on the effect to the child and his environment. The effects were recorded as (+) positive, (-) negative, or (0) neutral. The second observations were conducted in April and May of 1993.

3. Graduate Interviews

In April and May of 1993 graduates of the Even Start Family Literacy Program were interviewed individually at their place of residence by the research assistant. An instrument designed by the director of the evaluation team was used in conducting the interviews. The instrument recorded the length of time each graduate participated in the program; these ranged from five months to two years. The interview surveyed any changes that had occurred since participating in the program in the areas of education, job opportunities, finances, family situations, parenting and children's schooling. The interviews were tape recorded and then transcribed to be included in the evaluation report.

4. The Parent Participant Questionnaire

The interviews were conducted by the ET Associate Director during the months of May and June in 1993. The participants were interviewed individually in their home during a thirty minute session. Answers were recorded on the questionnaire during the interview.

5. The Gordon Personal Profile

The GPP was administered by the ET Associate Director and a Spanish interpreter for pre and post testing. The first tests were administered late September of 1992 and the post tests were completed in April and May of 1993. Participants were individually interviewed in a separate room while attending their adult education classes at the Even Start site.

6. The Peabody Picture Vocabulary (PPVT)

The PPVT and TVIP was administered by the Associate Director and the Spanish tests were administered by the Spanish speaking examiner. The PPVT-R (Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test - Revised) is designed to measure a subject's receptive (hearing) vocabulary for Standard American English. It takes approximately 10 to 20 minutes to administer and requires no reading by the examinee. It consists of 2 forms (L & M). The examinee is asked to indicate which of four pictures correspond to a word read aloud by the

examiner. They may indicate either verbally or by pointing to the picture. There is also a form (TVIP) for Spanish-speaking children.

The PPVT-R and the TVIP were administered to the target group of children during the fall and spring testing periods. Each child was tested individually.

7. The Preschool Screening Inventory (PSI)

The PSI, which is required by NEIS, was administered by the Associate Director. The Spanish version of the test was administered to target Spanish speaking children by the Even Start Supervisor. The PSI has 32-items and was selected as a face-valid measure of school readiness. The test has been used to evaluate preschool children in a number of disadvantaged preschool programs and is relatively brief to administer.

8. Follow-up Interviews on Preschool Graduates

The follow-up interview questionnaire was administered to teachers of the preschool graduates who had spent a minimum of one year in the OKC Even Start Literacy program. The population consisted of twelve graduates who were currently enrolled in a Head Start, kindergarten and first grade programs in Oklahoma City Public Schools during the 1992-93 academic year. The interview questionnaire took approximately 30 minutes to complete. The target students as well as all other students of the same sex were ranked by the teacher.

9. The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)

The CASAS was administered to the adults during their adult education classes. The pre and post tests were administered in both the fall and spring, respectively. The test was selected by NEIS because it measures the student's ability to apply skills in "real life" situations. The test consists of multiple choice questions and is designed to test the adults ability to apply functional context by stressing the application of skills. The test has different levels for pre and post test alternative forms. The test takes approximately 60 minutes and consists of 24 to 38 items.

10. The National Evaluation Information System (NEIS)

The project forms were recorded by the Even Start staff. Additional assistance was given by the ET project staff. The information was summarized to be included in the evaluation report to answer specific questions for the evaluation design. Additional information from the forms was summarized and added to the appendix for specific referral information.

DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of data includes the summary of both qualitative and quantitative instruments which provides a diverse study of the characteristics of the participants. A detailed quantitative summary is included in the appendix. To analyze the adult literacy component of the program the CASAS scores and the GED results were reported. To evaluate the parenting component of the program the Caldwell Home Inventory and the Participant Interviews were summarized. The preschool literacy component of the evaluation included the PPVT, TVIP and PSI with an additional qualitative component developed by the ET called the Social Interaction and Literacy Observation Scale. An additional longitudinal component was added this year to the preschool section which consisted of a follow-up conducted on the preschool graduates who were in advanced educational programs in the Oklahoma City area. To determine the overall quality of the program additional information was summarized from the content of the parent participant and adult graduate interviews with the Gordon Personal Profile providing information on changes in self-esteem.

1. Characteristics of Participants

Summary of the Participants' Characteristics

The following is a selected summary of the total number of Adult Participants reported on the Participant Characteristic Intake form developed by NEIS. For detailed information on the participants refer to the summary in the Appendix.

Total number of adults served in 1991-92 consisted of a N = 87 which included both the males and females.

Culture	Number	Percentile
Spanish American	55	63.2%
European American	24	27.5%
African American	5	5.7%
Native American	3	3.7%

The total number of female adults served in 1992-93 consisted of a N = 53

Spanish American	38	71.7%
European American	7	13%
African American	6	11%
Native American	2	3%

Nationally, the race of adults in Cohort 1 for the 1990-1991 program year were: 32% Black, 39% White, 4% Native American, and 19% Latino. The March 1993 report distributed at the National Evaluation of Even Start reported on 1991-92 services to adults by race were: 26.5% Black, 46.2% White, 5.7% Native American, and 18.5% Latino. The Oklahoma site has a higher percentage of Spanish American adult female students than the national population.

The National Evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program 1990-91 family structure consisted of 39% single families, 49% couples, 11% extended families and 1% other. The family structure for the Oklahoma City Even Start in 1991-92 consisted of thirty-eight families: 11 single parent families (28.9%); 16 couples (42.1%); and 11 (28.9%) extended families which were reported on intake forms. In the 1992-93 population of twenty-two intake families consisted of 36.36% single families, 59.09% couples, 4.55% extended families and 0% other.

Last year the primary sources of financial support were: job wages (47.3%) and government assistance (42.1%). The national data for 1990-91 reported 47% job wages and 52% government assistance. This year the financial support coming from job wages for the twenty-two entering families was 54.55% with 45.45% being on government assistance. Only 4.55% had family income in the range of \$15,000.00 to \$20,000.00 with 95.55% earning below.

In summary, the entering participants in 1992-93 had a higher percentage of Spanish American adults than the national population. There is also a higher percentage of families reported as couples compared to the national data in 1990-91 and 1992-92 which reported 49% both years. The OKC participants have 59% couples reported this year. The new families this year reported 45% on government assistance as compared to the national population of 48%.

Summary of Retention

Throughout the 1991-92 school year, fifty families were served by the Even Start program while in 1992-93 fifty three families with eleven withdrawing and fourteen withdrawing the previous year. The reasons recorded on the exit interview forms were as follows:

- 1 - Family illness
- 1 - Serious family problems
- 1 - Moved out of state and/or country
- 3 - Lack of commitment
- 1 - Lack of interest
- 4 - Need for employment

11 Total

The retention rate was 72% in 1991-92 with fifty families being served and fourteen (28%) of the families being lost to attrition.

The program consistently maintains 45 to 46 active families. There was an increase in the retention of the fifty three families this year to 80% with 11 families (20%) leaving the program.

In calculating the percentile the total number of families consistently served during each of the three years was 46. This number was used to determine the percent of families who remained in the program over the past three years. In 1992-93 37% of the families that remained in the program for the duration of the year were returning from the previous year. Of the 46 families that were served during the 1992-93 school year, the final data analysis constitutes the time spent within the program:

3 years	13 families...	28%
2- 2.11 years.....	3 families...	7%
1- 1.11 years.....	18 families...	39%
6 months-11 months.....	7 families...	15%
< 6 months.....	5 families...	11%

In evaluating retention a third factor of daily attendance was evaluated this year. It was reported from the daily attendance records that 42% of the English speaking students attended at least 80% of the time and 78% of the ESL students attended at least 80% of the time. The population of ESL students consists of the 100% first generation immigrants.

Three additional factors that have been identified by evaluators, participants and staff members as important components to making the educational opportunity possible are the daily bus service, meals and early learning programs.

2. Adult Literacy Component

CASAS Scores

The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and the successful completion of the GED is being used as a measure for the literacy skills of the adults involved in the program. 68.19% of the participants who enrolled in the Fall of 1991 had not gone beyond the ninth grade. In fact, 22.74% only completed the sixth grade. In the national report of Cohort I projects for 1991, the percentage of participants below the ninth grade was 41%. This indicates that the Oklahoma City Public School Even Start participants' educational level is lower than the national (NEIS, 1992:11 and 1993:3). As students were lost to attrition new families were added to the program and tested. These scores are not included in this report but will be reflected in the final data summary in the Appendix.

There were thirty-seven and twenty adult women who took the CASAS Reading and Math skills pre-test in the both fall of 1991 and 1992, respectively. The CASAS mean score for the participants was 221.62 in 1991 and 227.15 in 1992. The scores ranged from a low of 182

to a high score of 256 in 1991 and a low of 200 to a high of 241 in 1992. These mean scores do not reflect the levels of the CASAS.

The post-test was completed by nineteen adults from the original population in the Spring of 1992. The participants mean scaled score on the CASAS for the post-test was 234.47. All participants took a minimum of one level higher on the post-test than the pre-test.

In late January of 1993, thirty-five adults took the CASAS post test. The CASAS post test mean scaled score was 224.9 for the total population. Further analysis of the data was made on only 15 adults who had entered the program in the fall of 1992 and who took both the pre and post tests. The CASAS pre and post test scores for the identified population was 226.13 and 229.27, respectively.

The CASAS scores were analyzed in January, 1993, to work on specific skills needed by each student. The purpose was to analyze the students' strengths and empower them with this awareness. No CASAS test was administered in the late spring.

In May of 1993 students were administered the math CASAS. All students in both the ESL and English speaking class from the pre to post test increased in level test forms and made higher scores. The pre test mean was 217 with the post test mean 229 in the English speaking class. The ESL class had an mean math pre-test score of 198 with a post-test score of 208.

GED Results

One of the major thrusts of the Adult Education component is to help prepare those students whose academic skills are strongest for the GED High School Equivalency Diploma. As reported earlier, 47.1% of the 37 adult students in the program in 1991 had completed only up to the ninth grade; therefore, the GED was not a realistic goal for all of the participants. In the Spring of 1993 ten (10) students passed the GED. Four individuals who passed the GED last year are continuing in the program to improve their skills. For example, one of the four returned this spring to work on improving her Math and writing skills. Three students currently hold high school diplomas. The results are as follows:

9 received their GED certificate in the Spring of 1992
10 received their GED certificate in the Spring of 1993

The breakdown by ethnic characteristics of the 9 students who passed the GED in the Spring of 1992 and 1993 are shown below:

Spring 1992.....	Spring 1993.....
Spanish-American 6	Spanish-American 9
African-American 1	African-American 1
European-American 2	

3. Parenting Component

Caldwell Home Inventory for Families of Infants and Toddlers

The Caldwell Home Inventory for Families of Infants and Toddlers (Birth-Age 3) was administered to thirteen (13) participant families during entry into the program and at the second administration. Each of the inventories was observed and rated during the home visit at the convenience of the families. The mean scores in all 6 subscale areas increased from the initial administration to the second administration of the instrument.

The subscale area showing the greatest increase in mean scores was the Provision of Play Materials. Overall, families began to utilize resources within their own homes to develop games and other learning activities for their children. For example, the increase in this subscale area alone ranged from 1 to 4, with an average increase of the post-observation group being 2.25. Other areas showing a mean increase of one are Parent Responsivity, Acceptance, Organization of Environment, Parent Involvement, and a Variety of Stimulation.

The range of increase in the Parent Responsivity subscale is from 1 to 3 points, with an average of 2. The range of increases in the Parent Involvement and Variety of Stimulation subscales was from 1 to 3 and 1 to 2, respectively. The average gain in the categories of Acceptance and Organization of Environment was 2 and 1, respectively, while the average increase in each category remains the same as the average gain.

During the pre test at entry into the program, 5 families rated in the lower-fourth rating scale, 6 families qualified in the middle-half rating scale, and 2 families of 13 were rated in the upper-fourth rating scale categories. Due to attrition, only 6 of the original 13 families remained in the program for post-observation. Of these particular families, 3 families were in the lower-fourth category while the other 3 families were in the middle-half category at intake. During the post observation, all six families were in the middle-half range, with all total scores increasing in a range of 3 to 13, with a total increase of 43 and an average increase of 7.2. These results of the Caldwell Home Inventory for Families of Infants and Toddlers (Birth to Age 3) suggests that the home environments of participants in the Even Start program had improved since entry into the program. (See Caldwell Tables below and on following page.)

Caldwell Home Inventory for Families of Preschoolers

The Caldwell Home Inventory for Families of Preschoolers (3-6 years) was administered to 17 families, with 15 remaining after 2 families withdrew from the program mid-year. The mean scores in all eight subscale areas increased from the initial administration at the time of entry into the Even Start Program to the second administration.

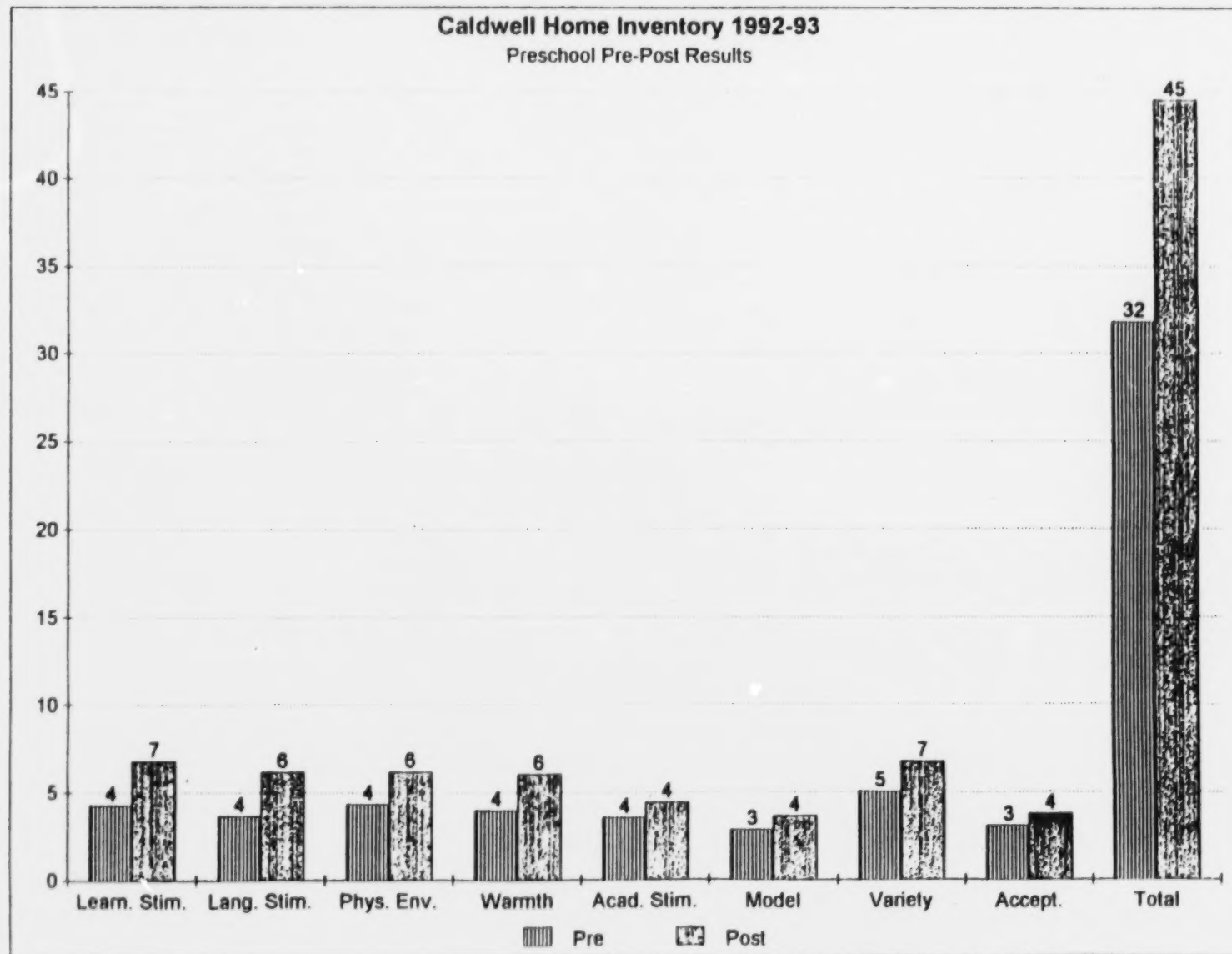
The largest gains occurred in the subscale area of the Provision of Learning Stimulation within the home. The pretest mean was 4, while the post test mean increased to 7. The parent interviews provided the reasons for such an increase as relating to the congruence of parent discussion group topics to home living, as well as the strength of the home visits with the family's facilitator. Other areas that had an increase from pre to post test results of two (2) were Language Stimulation, Physical Environment, Warmth and Receptance, and Variety of Experience. Other areas that had a slight increase over time were Modeling and Acceptance. The mean score for Academic Stimulation remained at 4. The results indicated that as a group the participants had moved from the lowest middle-half range to the upper middle-half range in providing appropriate learning stimulation for their children in the home environment. In many cases, the target population was able to grow from a middle-half overall ranking to an upper-fourth ranking during the post observation. 3 of 17 families increased their overall score but remained within the middle-half category for both the pre and post test. One (1) family increased their total score from 29 to 47, reflecting an increase from the lower-fourth to upper-fourth division.

The total mean score for the Caldwell Home Inventory for Preschoolers increased from 32 to 45 during the target year of observation. As a composite score, this increase demonstrates the groups' substantial growth from the lower middle-half group to the upper middle-half group in providing appropriate activities and models for their young children.

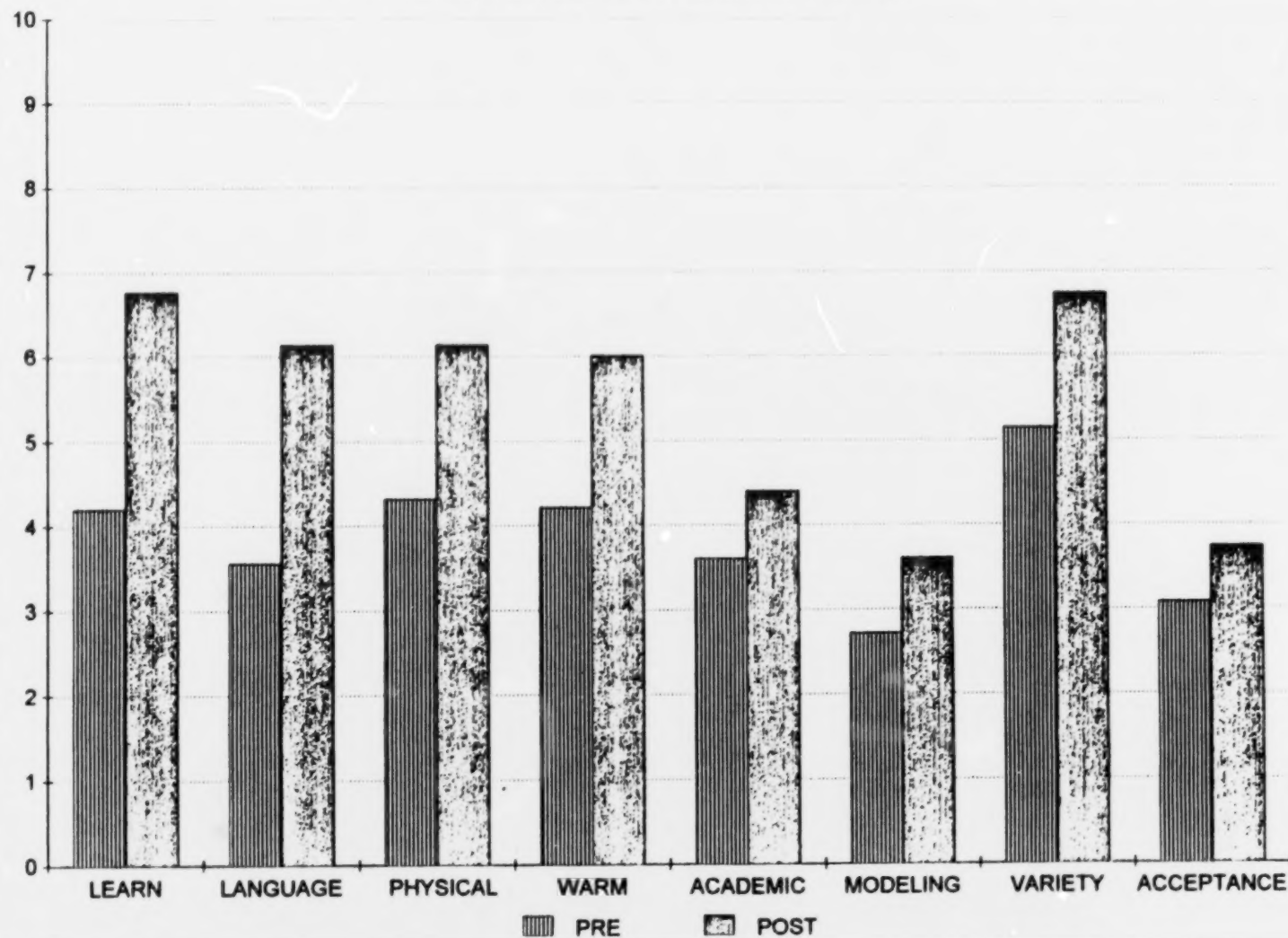
In looking at the increases of each subarea during both the 1991-92 and 1992-93 years, a pattern can be seen in the subareas and corresponding scores. For example, the highest post test score in 1991-92 was in the subarea of "Variety of Experiences in the Home", with a post test score of 6. The highest post test scores for 1992-93 was in the subareas of "Learning Stimulation" and "Variety". "Modeling" received an increase of 1 during both the 1991-92 and 1992-93 school years. The 1993 post-test scores were comparable to those in 1991-92, yet the pre-test scores were considerably higher in the subareas of Learning Stimulation and Academic Stimulation during the 1992-93 school year.

Ultimately, a pattern of growth resulting from a combination of home visits, play group, and parent discussion can be seen in the post-test subarea scores. During the parent interviews, parents responded that the home visits gave many of them affirmation of positive parenting episodes, especially in the sub-areas of Learning Stimulation and Variety of Experiences. (Refer to the charts on the following pages for detailed information on the HOME)

Caldwell Home Inventory 1992-93
Preschool Pre-Post Results



CALDWELL HOME INVENTORY
PRE AND POST SCORES: PRESCHOOL CHILDREN



4. Early Childhood Component

This component of the evaluation consists of a summary of the findings from the Preschool Inventory, Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, The Social Interaction and Literacy Scale and the Follow-up Interviews on preschool graduates teachers.

Preschool Screening Inventory

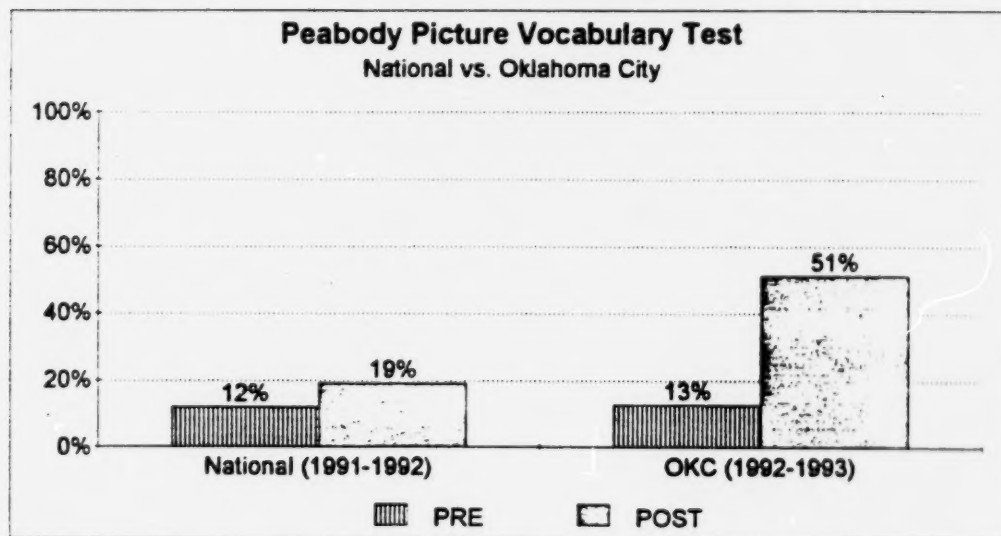
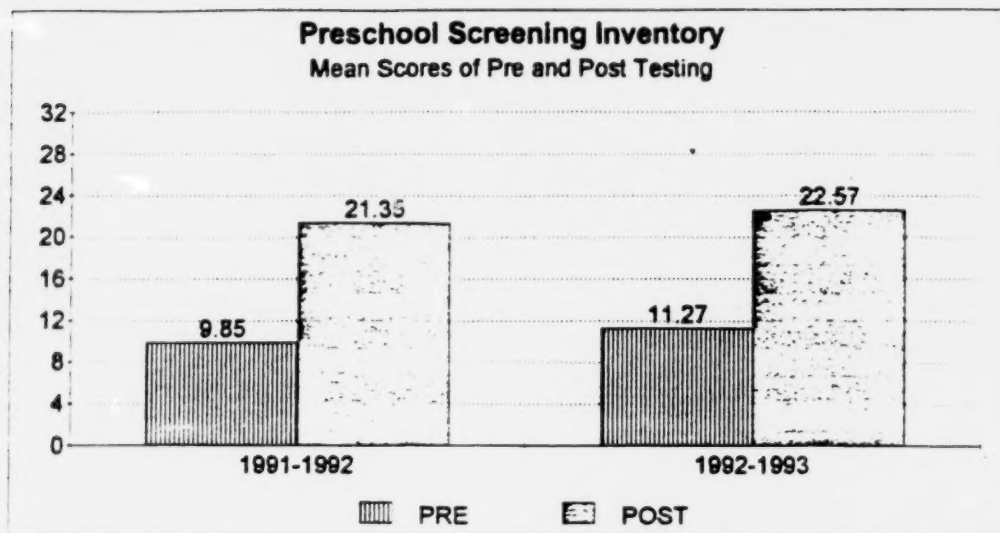
The Preschool Screening Inventory (PSI) was administered to all preschool children entering the program. Fourteen preschool children took the test in both the Fall of 1991 and in the Spring of 1992. The mean average score of Fall 1991 testing was 9.85. The mean average score of Spring 1992 testing was 21.35. These scores indicate an increase in school readiness of the children tested. (See the PSI Table on the following page.)

In the Fall of 1992 twenty-two children were of eligible age to take the PSI. Only fourteen children were administered both the pre and post PSI. Eight children out of the twenty-two were unable to test in the pre-test; however, they were able to test in post-testing session. This identified population had a mean score of 11.27 on the pre-test followed by a post-test mean score of 22.57. The national evaluation of the PSI stated that the "Even Start children gain at double the expected rate on the Preschool Inventory (NEIS and IDS, 1993:8)." The Oklahoma City Even Start preschool children more than doubled their scores from the pre to post test.

Picture Vocabulary Test

All entrants over three years of age are administered the PPVT-R or the TVIP. The percentile and standard score will be reported in a summary of the target population which were the new entrants for the 1992-93 school year. The test will be referred to as the Peabody Picture Vocabulary (PPVT-R) test without separate reference to the TVIP.

For evaluation purposes twenty-two children were eligible to be tested with only fourteen actually completing the test in the fall. Twenty of the target children were tested in the spring of 1993. The mean percentile of the initial testing was 13% and the mean percentile score in the second testing was 51%. This indicated an overall increase in the receptive vocabulary of the target population. The pre-test mean standard score for the group was 71.71 with a post standard score of 101.20. The Oklahoma City Even Start population showed a significant increase in percentile rankings when compared to the national Even Start children who moved from the 12th percentile to the 19th percentile as reported by NEIS in March of 1993 (National Even Start Evaluation Conference, 1993:8). (See the PPVT-P Table on the next page.)



Social Interaction and Literacy Observation Scale

The Social Interaction and Language Literacy Observation Scale was used to observe the target children in the program. The pre and post-observations consisted of observations on the target children while they were participating in the daily class routines or during the playgroup in a developmentally appropriate environment. The observations were completed on both social interaction and language/literacy behaviors. Each target child was observed for a total of forty minutes, twenty minutes during both the pre-observations and post-observations. Ten minutes was spent observing the social interaction, then ten minutes focused on language and literacy behaviors. The observations were completed during the fall and spring semesters on the two older age groups. The first age group was identified as ages 2-3 years. The second group consisted of children ages 3-5. The observations have been summarized in a qualitative descriptive narrative highlighting patterns of social, language and literacy development with environmental factors documented.

Social Interaction Scale: 2-3 Years. The summary data from the pre-observations consisted of primarily solitary and associative play by the target children. This interaction was mainly initiated by the teachers and the time span of the interactions was much longer than the sporadic observations of high functions of play, such as parallel and cooperative play episodes. The children were observed in a variety of learning activities: blocks, library, art, manipulative, homeliving, puzzles, writing, and other, such as music, puppetry, and outdoor play. The children primarily selected manipulative activities such as simple puzzles, as well as dramatic play components and sensory activities, such as water play.

The post-observations reported a marked increase in social interactions from the pre-observation data especially with decreases in the area of solitary play. Although the average effect of the unoccupied behavior was still negative, the time and frequency of these behaviors decreased. The incidents of unoccupied and onlooker behavior decreased markedly as children were observed being self-directed and as child-initiated social interaction increased. All other interactions were sighted as positive in the post-observations as children displayed more self-directed, self-controlled and self-help attributes.

The frequency of interactions between the teachers and children decreased in most of the learning centers, but increased in the library and writing centers by at least one of the teachers. The teachers' roles evolved from directors into facilitators as children were empowered to initiate their own interactions with their peers. The observed decrease in teacher-initiated social interaction is directly related to the increase in the sophistication of play and the various roles and responsibilities that these higher levels of play require. Note: a variance still

remains within the scale as a result of the individuals's attention span. Overall, the sophistication and longevity of social interaction amongst peers is positive and highly supportive of a developmentally appropriate classroom.

Language and Literacy Observations Scale: 2-3 Years. Overall, there were strong indicators in both the average time and average frequencies of higher-order language patterns during the post-observations. Although the frequency decreased in relation to average time observed, this is a positive correlation with respect to higher-order language patterns. Early developmental speech patterns were recorded with less frequency during the post-observations of targeted children in the younger class, while complex sentences and questioning increased from the pre to post-observations.

The average frequency of time spent in literacy activities also increased throughout the school year. The following learning centers were earmarked as specific "literacy activities" during the observations, although literacy related activities permeated the classroom: library area, writing center, and computer center. During the pre-observation of the children, there was a substantially higher number of interactions with teachers in the language and literacy areas. In contrast, post observations showed a marked increase of two to three child small groups in these areas as the interactions with teachers decreased. Children directed their own interests in the library area, either working in a dramatic play activity or reading alone. During post-observations, teachers were still observed working with the students at the writing area for much of the time observed, although a few students began taking on the role of teacher through peer-group teaching. Because over one-third of the children in the class speak Spanish, many of the children who were bilingual became translators for their peers and were readily able to switch from one language to the other in both reading and writing activities. During post-observations, children were observed self-directing themselves through transitions from one play area to another, and were able to effectively transition from a higher-energy level activity to a lower-energy level activity, such as reading and writing.

Social Interaction Scale: 3-5 Years. The target children in this class demonstrated higher-levels of play during the post-observations. For example, the incidence of solitary play decreased dramatically and were in lesser time frequencies than in the pre-observations. The effects of solitary play during post-observations were positive relating to the child's ability to choose solitary play rather than solitary play being a result of social group misfunction. Children were also better able to transition from individual and small-group activity during post-observations. The frequency of unoccupied behavior decreased, relating to the increase in the children's ability to self-direct,

self-control, and self-evaluate their own behavior as the year progressed. Unoccupied behavior also changed from a negative to positive effect during post-observations, whereas they were negative in average affect during the pre-observations.

The types of games also matured in difficulty and rule-orientations as the year progressed. For example, during the pre-observations, most of the games played were initiated by the teacher and could only include one or two children. These same children were observed with and without teachers engaging in the same rule-oriented games with larger groups of 4-5 children during the latter observations. This is directly related to their ability to monitor their and others' behaviors in a socially acceptable way. Some children were able to manipulate rules to accommodate an odd group-number, for instance, and monitor the following of the rules throughout the games. Teachers were able to facilitate small and large group play during post-observations and there was a marked decrease in aggressive play behavior. Students were more responsive to teachers' guidance and redirection toward more appropriate activities, but much of the inappropriate behavior was either interrupted by other students or self-directed.

Blockbuilding and dramatic play centers had a substantial increase of activity as noted in the play matrix. Incidents of both parallel and cooperative play occurred with higher frequency, and self-help skills in these areas flourished during the post-observations. In conclusion, the children were interacting in more socially appropriate ways and in higher levels of play. These interactions were initiated mainly by peers, whereas in the pre-observations, most of the interactions were teacher-initiated.

Language and Literacy: 3-5 Years. The main growth area in this age group was the increase in the number of higher-order thinking processes demonstrated through language use. For example, during the pre-observations, the frequency and average time of nonverbal communication and lower order communication methods was high. During post-observations, nonverbal communication dropped dramatically as logical reasoning, prediction, projection and questions increased. Not only did the average time of these areas increase, but the average frequency doubled in some areas. The children were better able to express their needs verbally, as demonstrated by the increase in self-maintaining, reporting, and logical reasoning skills. Their strategies were much more fine-tuned as they were better able to verbalize their concerns by asking questions, as well as apply imaginative language during play activities.

During post-observations, the evaluator fit the language patterns into an interaction summary matrix by class playscape. This enabled the research team to evaluate the various types of communication that were taking place by class area. The interaction matrix showed that a great increase in the quality of

verbalization took place in the library and writing areas with peers, as opposed to the results of teacher language interaction in these same areas during the pre-observations. Other areas that had increases in peer language interactions were the block, art, manipulatives, homeliving and puzzle areas. The environment was constantly set for success in literacy activities: children were able to write, read, listen and speak at all opportunities during the day. One-third of the population in the class speaks Spanish, so many of the students acted as translators for visitors, parents, and their peers when needed. These children displayed the same language maturity in their native language and were able to flow easily from English to Spanish. As the year progressed, the predominantly Spanish-speaking children demonstrated their confidence in the English language by communicating w/other Spanish speakers in English and singing songs in both English and Spanish. Even when playing with Spanish-speaking peers exclusively in a small-group activity, the chosen language during sensory play was usually English. The post-observations also showed evidence of writing skills in daily meaningful activities, such as chart-making, book-writing and list-making. The language experience activities were initiated by both students and teachers with the dictation completed in both Spanish and English.

Follow-up Interviews on Preschool Graduates

There were twelve children identified as graduates of the Even Start who had spent a minimum of one year in the program. The children were in Head Starts, kindergartens, EMH preschools, and first grades. The Director of the Evaluation project contacted each child's school principal then appointments were made to visit with each child's teacher individually. The interviews took approximately 30 minutes. Each teacher was given a form to rank all of the children of the same sex as the Even Start graduate. A definition page was provided for teacher to explain the meaning of each statement. The rankings were analyzed into male and female graduates with the control group being identified as the non-graduates of the program who were in the same class in a neighborhood school. Additional data will report pre and post weighted scores on Briggance Screening on all kindergarten students.

The students were ranked with a 4 - excellent, 3 - above average, 2 - average and 1 -below average. The rankings were totaled on each child then summarized into male graduates, female graduates, male control and female control. The focus of the rankings was in academic performance with literacy, social awareness, emotional development, physical development and language being the primary areas of focus. The second component was a prediction of school success. The final section of the form asked for a ranking of parental support and participation of all the same students.

In analyzing the data summary of the mean rankings teachers ranked

Even Start graduates higher than the total ranking mean of the control group. Even Start Male Graduates had a total mean ranking of 58.4 while the male control group had a mean ranking of 49.3. There were four male graduates and 31 males in the control population. The female ES graduates consisted of eight students in EMH, Head Start, kindergarten and 1st grade with fifty-two females in the control group. The mean ranking for the graduates was 52.66 and the control group ranking was 44.92.

All of the kindergarten children had pre and post Kindergarten Brigance Screening total weighted scores. Those scores were averaged and a mean was given for the five kindergarten children currently enrolled in the Oklahoma City Public School kindergartens. The pre-test means were 68.4 and the post test mean was 92.5. Only one child had a weighted score below 94.5 on the post-test.

The conclusion drawn from the data was that the Oklahoma City Even Start program prepares the children for their future educational success. The test scores screened for future school success and the teachers rankings indicated higher mean rankings for the graduate population than the control group.

5. Overall Quality of the Program

The overall quality of the program was determined from three additional sources of data. The parent interviews were comprehensive and reflect the attitude of the adult population involved in the program. The Gordon Personal Profile test scores were used to obtain additional information on the participants' self esteem. Finally, the follow-up of graduates was used as a third measure to evaluate the quality of the program.

Parent Participant Interviews

The evaluator interviewed a total of 29 parents for program quality information as well as personal information pertaining to participants' reasons for entering this particular program and other literacy programs in the past. The goal of the interview form was to discover underlying reasons for leaving highschool, other programs, and possibly the Even Start Literacy program, as some of the interviews were conducted as exit interviews as well. 19 newly joining parents remained in the program by April, 1993, while 10 families departed the program within the October-May time span. The length of time that these exiting families remained in the program varied from 1 month to 4 months. All parents were asked the same questions and were allowed ample time to satisfactorily answer them. Interpreters were used with participants whose primary language was Spanish.

Interview Format. A structured interview format was followed using the Oklahoma City Even Start Parent Interview Questionnaire developed jointly by the director of the Oklahoma City Even Start

Evaluation Team and the Even Start Family Literacy Program director. Participants' responses were recorded on the questionnaire at the time of the interviews. Additional questions were asked to clarify responses in order to assure authentic representation of the participants' viewpoints. The interviews were conducted by the Associate Director of research and a Spanish-speaking interpreter if needed during the months of April and May. Exit interviews were conducted as participants left the program. Each individual interview required approximately thirty to sixty minutes to complete.

Interview Findings. The information obtained from the Parent Questionnaire was utilized to provide a descriptive account of participants' viewpoints of the impact of the Even Start Program on themselves and their families.

Participants' Early Educational Experiences. 13 of the 29 participants indicated that they received familial (parents, guardians, or extended family members) support throughout their early schooling experiences. Of the 29 participants, 15 had early schooling in Mexico, where the required number of years of primary school is much lower than that in the U.S.: sixth grade. Cultural values of education also played a large part in the decision to leave school at an early age: many participants reflected that their families valued work and wages much more than education, a clear indication of needs from economic pressures within the family at a young age. 16 participants recorded that there was some form of support from the home environment, although the consistency of support was sporadic.

The participants were asked to describe their feelings about their early educational experiences (elementary and secondary) including educational and social activities, teachers, and peers. Participants gave mixed responses. 20 of the 29 participants indicated that they had positive feelings about their teachers and school activities during the first 2 years, but that these feelings changed by the second grade. They felt that they were failures and had difficulty establishing high self-esteem within the school environment. 9 participants recalled some positive early learning experiences, but also reported being physically or emotionally abused within the classroom by the third year of school. These forms of abuse included, but are not limited to, hitting, hand-slapping, name-calling, spanking, pinching, isolation, and being yelled at. Of these 29 participants, 14 participants left school before highschool. 2 participants have their highschool diplomas, but needed help with math and reading in order to succeed in the workplace. Both of these participants also had difficulty with physical abuse in both grade school and highschool.

Of the 29 participants, 27 also had negative feelings toward social or extracurricular activities. Some of their feelings were due to lack of exposure due to familial financial pressures, as well as

exclusion due to low self-esteem and subsequently took low profiles in social settings. Of the 29 participants, 28 reported that these early feelings of inadequacy re-emerged throughout their lives' endeavors, whether it be child-rearing, school, or work. These negative feelings included social interactions with both peers and adults. Six of the Hispanic participants reported that they were unable to participate due to work at home.

Reasons for Leaving School. Participants were asked to indicate the reasons they had left school before completion. Participants listed the following reasons for ultimately leaving school before completion:

1. Felt no need for school (8)
2. Family responsibilities (4)
3. Job (5)
4. Pregnancy (6)
5. Transportation (1)
6. Grades (2)
7. Feeling of not belonging (2)
8. Discrimination due to ethnicity (1)

The most common reason for leaving was the inability to see the importance of schooling in connection with their future success. School was not seen as a means to an end, but as a separate, distinct block that could be set aside.

Years Out of School and Reasons for Returning to School.

The length of time that the participants had been out of school ranged from two to 26 years. 18 participants have been out of school for 2-8 years, 3 participants for 9-12 years, and the remaining 8 have been out of school for 8 or more years. Many of these participants left school at a relatively young age, so the years out of school are not an indication of age ranges of participants. Participants indicated the following reasons for returning to school:

1. Help children with their school (22)
2. GED (15)
3. Improve writing (26)
4. Get a job or better job (5)
5. Improve English (15)
6. Improve reading comprehension (17)
7. Improve quality of life (17)
8. Improve math (7)
9. Improve parenting (4)
10. Improve self-esteem (3)

Although parenting and self-esteem ranked at the bottom percentile as reasons for entering school, these two qualities are among the highest benefits that they received upon leaving the program.

Reasons for Selecting Even Start. 26 of the 29 participants reported that they chose Even Start due to the program's inclusion of the whole family. Of these 26 families, 17 heard of the program by word of mouth from friends, neighbors, or relatives, while the remaining participants discovered the Even Start Program through their social workers. 2 of these had heard the director of the program speak at a school or a Hispanic Community support league. While 18 of the 29 participants had participated in other adult education programs, 15 had dropped out within the first year. The other 3 dropped out during the continuing year. Although reasons for leaving other programs varied, most participants left due to child care difficulties and family restraints, mainly monetary. Participants also reported feeling neglected in classes and that the programs were not tailored to suit their individual learning needs. Only 2 participants reported transportation difficulties. Due to the large number of Spanish-speaking participants, many of them felt the other available programs did not meet their multi-lingual needs satisfactorily.

Differences between Even Start and Other Adult Education Programs. Of the 15 participants who had attended other adult education programs, 14 indicated that the adult education programs at Even Start were more beneficial due to the following reasons: attention to individuals, center work, "hands-on" activities, relevance to family and everyday life, and cooperative learning. The great majority of the these participants ranked the cooperative learning circles to be the most helpful in learning new material in their adult education classes as well as strengthening learned skills. The most helpful asset of the cooperative learning groups was the non-threatening atmosphere created when "experts" were able to share their strategies as well as skills with the "novices." Both bilingual as well as predominantly Spanish-speaking students felt that these cooperative groups were both supportive and sensitive to their language needs. Native languages were looked upon as strengths instead of weaknesses and many English-speaking students learned Spanish as well. 23 of the 29 participants felt that the English-gearred adult education class was a very positive environment due to the integration of many Spanish-speaking students who had "graduated" from the ESL class into the mainstreamed classroom. They felt that the respect for various cultures permeated their group discussions and these feelings were dealt with in a positive avenue through journals as well. Other factors that ranked high among Even Start values was the staff interaction and genuine concern for the students. 20 of the 29 participants reported that they would go to their teacher if they had a personal problem, and of these, 17 indicated that they were able to discuss confidential information with the teachers. In making these comments, many of the participants compared the experiences they have at Even Start with the warm feelings they had with their positive early learning experiences.

Participants' Perspectives of Components of the Even Start Program. Participants were asked to rank which component of the Even Start services (Home Visits, Adult Education,, Play Group, Parenting Discussion Group, and Early Learning Center) was most beneficial to their families. In response to the request to rank the program components, 25 participants indicated that they thought all components were beneficial and that they thought Even Start would not be the same program without one of these programs. Participants stated that it was difficult for them to rank the components separately. The Play Group received 13 first rankings, Adult Education 12, Early Learning Center 3, and Parent Discussion 1. These totals reflect the intense appreciation the students had for the curriculum integration: they enjoyed learning strategies and skills that directly affected their lives as a part of the family. Although Parent Discussion only received 1 first ranking, it is by no means an indication of unimportance. All participants agreed that the discussion group helped them in some way to be a better parent. Two participants agreed that the effectiveness of the Play Group depended on the ability of the group to communicate effectively and openly to share parenting ideas.

Adult Education had the most second place rankings followed by Parent Discussion, Play Group, Early Learning Center, and Home Visits. Early Learning Center had the most third place rankings, and Parent Discussion and Home Visits received the most fourth place rankings. Although Home Visits was not ranked highly, 24 of the 29 participants had a favorable view of them. 5 participants felt that the visits were unnecessary, and thought that the facilitators repeated issues already discussed in the parent discussion group. Of the 24 participants who enjoyed the home visits, 20 thought that new information about parenting tips, games, and reading were shared primarily during home visits. Only 1 participant held a negative view of home visits, and these were a result of personality conflict with the parent facilitator.

Role of Parent Facilitators. According to the participants' perspectives, the parent facilitators served in varying capacities including the following:

- Professional child development specialist
- Friend to confide in
- Informs them of community and school programs
- Community service liaison (library, DHS services, shelters, etc)
- Family Support

Home Visits. Participants were asked to name three things that they had learned to do with their children as a result of home visits. Although many of the participants named many components, not all participants named three things. The following list indicates the responses given and the number of participants that listed each response.

How to read to children (22)
 Better ways to discipline and guide (19)
 How to play appropriately with children (18)
 Developmentally appropriate games and toys (18)
 Homemade games (18)
 How to talk to children (12)
 How to conference with teachers at schools (15)
 Family relationships (10)
 Self-esteem (5)
 Job interviewing (2)

During the interviews, parents reported that they had not known the importance of reading or playing with their children prior to attending the Even Start program. The parents stated that they had not known the importance of reading or play because it was never a part of their own upbringing. They wanted to break that illiteracy cycle and begin with good examples for their children. As a result of home visits, many of the parents are beginning to read for adult pleasure as well, and the children are able to see worthiness and the enjoyment of reading in their home environment as well as their school environment. Many parents say that their change toward reading has affected their entire family. As one participant stated:

"My oldest child is in the sixth grade. When she used to come home, she would turn on the television and sit on the couch until bedtime. I would tell her not to watch so much, but it didn't matter: I would end up sitting next to her and watch it too. Now, I sit on the floor with my younger son and daughter, play games, and read with them. I don't even have to say anything - my older daughter plays with us and reads magazines next to me. She joins us and we are now a family."

Another parent summed up her new ideas about guiding children:

"I was spanked a lot, so I thought it was okay. But it didn't do anything for my child. Now I know why. My facilitator showed me what to say and do, and I get to practice with her there. At first, she had to work with me a lot because I would get lost or forget what else to do. Now, I can show off at play group because my girl listens to me. I don't have to spank anymore."

Adult Education. Participants were asked to describe any changes they had made as adult learners as a result of participation in the Even Start program. 20 participants responded that they had made changes. Two participants indicated that they had made no changes, and 7 participants agreed that they were in the process of making necessary changes. Changes mentioned by the participants were:

Spend more time reading
 Find outside interests for enjoyment
 Spend time reading with and to children
 Reflect on own experiences in journals, explore feelings
 Be responsible for own work and endeavors
 Think more positively about self and abilities

Respect self and others with different ideas
Trust others, make friends

15 participants agreed that they value reading for pleasure much more and are not afraid to write in fear of making mistakes. Journal writing has made a significant impact in the lives of 19 of the 29 participants, where they are able to deal with inner conflict and problem solve in an appropriate mode. This reflection enabled them to deal responsibly with their life's endeavors. Another strong value from the cooperative learning groups is role-taking and respect for others' stages of intellectual as well as social growth. 22 participants felt that the cooperative learning groups enabled them to feel non-threatened and that they learned more in this working context.

Playgroup and Early Learning Center. Participants were asked what they thought their children had learned as a result of participation in Play Group and the Early Learning Center. Participants listed the following:

- Sharing
- Playing with others
- Value of written word
- Communication skills]
- Follow rules
- English
- Art, music, finger plays
- Listening
- Shapes and colors
- School readiness (math concepts, reading, names, etc...)

Participants also commented on personal changes that their children had made. Five parents reported that their children had been shy at the onset of the program but were much better at communicating and making friends now. 10 parents felt that socialization was the most important factor that the children learn before they go to kindergarten, 10 parents felt that reading and writing were most important, and 6 parents felt that they had to know nursery rhymes and songs to be successful in school. 3 parents weren't sure what the children should know.

15 parents felt that the Early Learning Center also helped them to work with their other children. Ideas for games and songs enabled them to tailor specific activities for their children's needs at home, and 2 parents took activities to their child's school for the teacher to use in the classroom. They felt that the Early Learning Center gave them confidence to know which activities were developmentally appropriate for their children at various ages.

21 participants felt that the Early Learning Center was able to help their child's siblings by modeling proper behavior as well. The children gained excellent self-help skills and problem-solving ability through their interactions with peers, and these strategies and behaviors followed them in various family and other social

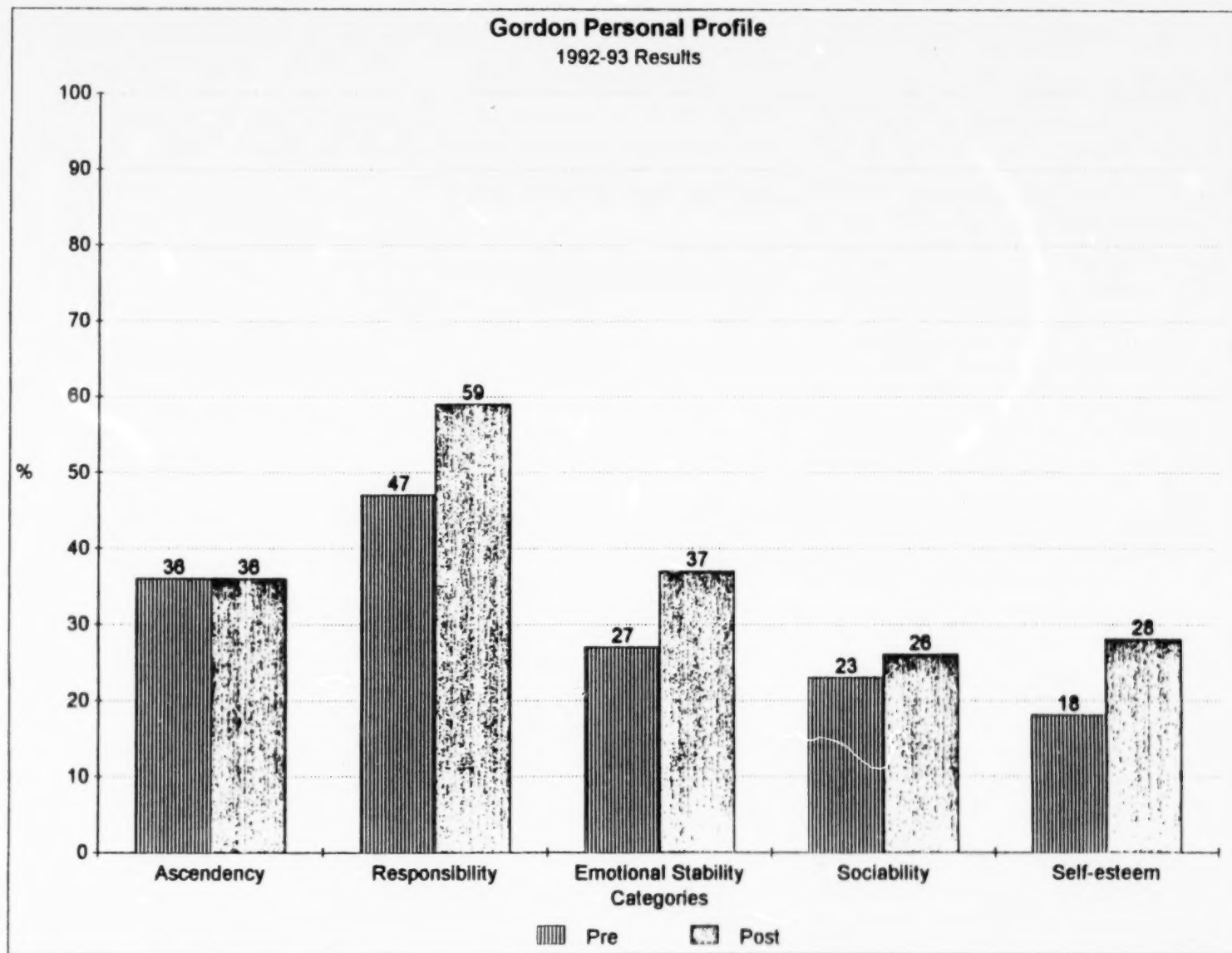
settings. Another high point in the Early Learning Center program is the responsibility that is instilled in children at a young age. 17 participants agreed that their children were more responsible for their behaviors, actions, and belongings as a result of being involved in the program.

Gordon Personal Profile

During a two week pre-testing period in the Fall of 1992, the Gordon Personal Profile was administered by the Associate Director for Evaluation to 20 entering women participating in adult education or English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. The post-testing was done in the month of May. The purpose of using this instrument was to identify if the program promoted a growth in self-esteem.

A self-concept percentile was compared in the pre and post test. The self-esteem is a total composite of the four areas of ascendancy, responsibility, emotional stability, and sociability. The mean ascendancy scores on the pre and post remained at the same percentile with no change for the group. Ascendancy is defined as those who are self-assured in their relationship with others. The emotional stability score increased 10% in the mean of the group. It measures the emotional stability of the participant and the extent of worries, anxieties and nervous tension. The responsibility pre and post percentiles increased 12% points. This area identifies the individual's ability to remain on task and avoid irresponsible behavior. The sociability percentile increased only 3 percent.

The mean percentile on self-esteem increased 10%. This was influenced by a change in thinking related to responsibility and emotional stability. As a result there was evidence that the OKC Even Start program provided an environment where individual students could develop a higher self-esteem. The mean score of 72 or lower is defined in the Gordon Personality Inventory as low self-esteem. The mean self-esteem score went from 72 to 76. In other words according to the Gordon Personal Profile, the target population for 1992-93 moved out of the low self-esteem category during the nine months spent in the program. (Refer to table on next page for details)



Follow-up of Adult Graduates

Five graduates were interviewed in May 1993. They had participated in the Even Start program 1, 2, and 3 years, respectively.

All the women interviewed reported an increase in self-esteem as a result of participating in the Even Start program. They said they had a more positive outlook on life. Other major changes reported were improved English language skills and better discipline methods with their children.

According to the women interviewed, the major strengths of the program include the support given to the women by the teachers and home facilitators. No weaknesses were reported.

The women interviewed had completed various levels of education. One woman had a teaching degree in Mexico, one had completed 12 years of school in Mexico and had worked as a bookkeeper in that country, one had graduated high school in the U.S., and two had completed 10th grade in the United States.

Only two of the five women reported having had a negative attitude toward school before beginning the program. They commented that they had not realized the importance of education before leaving school. As a result of the program, they felt they would communicate the importance of education to their own children; by both word and by example.

All the women reported that literacy was a high priority in their homes. They all reported buying many books for their children. Some had purchased book shelves and placed them in the children's rooms with their own books. Several women said that even though they were no longer at Even Start, they still went to the site and were allowed to check out books from the library. One woman summed up the nightly reading habits of her family by saying, "Reading a book is like a goodnight kiss."

All the women interviewed would like to continue their education in some way. Two women are planning to go the community college and take secretarial and computer training. One is planning on getting teacher certification in Oklahoma. One woman would like to work with children in a program such as Even Start.

Some of the women reported having temporary jobs in the past; such as waitress, babysitting, etc. One woman taught school in Mexico, and one woman was a bookkeeper in Mexico. Since the program, one woman is working as a teacher's aide in the Oklahoma City Public Schools. Another woman translates for a real estate agent in the Hispanic community. One woman was able to find temporary work in an office because of her experience with the computer in the Even Start office. One woman volunteered in an office to gain experience in English and in American methods of doing business.

Several of the women were on AFDC when they entered the program. The Even Start home facilitators were instrumental in directing one woman to medical assistance for her family. They also helped one woman receive testing and referral for her daughter who was having learning problems.

One of the changes that all the women reported as a result of the Even Start program was in their discipline. Most of the woman reported that in their homes yelling and hitting had been the method of discipline most frequently used before the program. They now feel that they have learned different skills in discipline, such as time out and reported listening more to their children. One woman said she has learned to be more patient with her children while another now gives her children choices. One woman said that she believes that her children can talk to her about things (such as sex), which she was never able to talk about with her own parents.

All of the women feel that their school-age children are doing well in school because of their own participation in Even Start. Some of the children also were participants in the program. They reported that education was made a priority in the home, and therefore they felt their children responded in school. All of the women attend parent-teacher conferences and other school-related activities. All of the parent participants reported that they felt more confident and comfortable in talking with their child's teacher since attending the program, due to modeling teacher-parent conferences.

Several of the women, particularly the Spanish-speaking ones, reported being very shy and insecure in meeting people and in going out in public before attending Even Start. Now they feel able to meet others and are more comfortable in new situations. One woman volunteered in a hospital while another volunteered to help a Spanish radio station set up a folkdancing program in the community and made costumes.

Most of the women have not reported immediate financial improvement in their families, but believe as a result of the program, they are optimistic about the future. A consistent comment that these women had concerning the Even Start program was that they would like to see it expanded to offer the program for more parents.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose for the evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program was to determine the effectiveness of the Oklahoma City Public Schools Even Start Family Literacy Project in reaching the established goals: 1) improve the basic literacy and employment skills of parents so that they can achieve economic, educational, and social goals; 2) enable parents to take a teaching-guiding role with their children that will increase their own self-esteem as parents and teachers of their children; 3) encourage parents to become true partners with schools in their children's education; 4) enhance parental skills so that parents can help their children learn when school is not in session; 5) provide an early childhood program that fosters a delight in learning; a positive self-image; and social, cognitive, emotional, and physical development; 6) provide referrals to community and city agencies for a variety of services.

I. CONCLUSIONS

Four questions were proposed to guide the work of the Oklahoma City University Evaluation team: 1) What are the basic characteristics of the population? 2) How has the program affected the adults' views of themselves as learners? 3) How has the program affected the adults' views of themselves as parents? 4) How has the early childhood education component affected the young children in the program? Conclusions of the evaluation team are presented in response to the questions.

Basic characteristics of the population, numbers of families served, and retention rate of the program.

1. The target population for 1992-93 consisted of 71.7% Spanish American, 13% European American, 11% African American and 3% Native American. The majority population in the target families is Spanish American who are first generation.

2. The retention rate increased in 1992-93 to 80% compared to 72% in 1991-92. This is a higher rate of retention than the national

percentile for adult literacy programs.

3. The retention rate for the three years has been flexible. Families have moved through the program to meet their own needs. As students have needed individual support they have moved in and out of the program. Twenty-eight percent of the families have been in the program for three complete years. Nineteen adult participants have completed the GED in the past two years. Eight families have actually graduated from the program.

Program effects on adults' views of themselves as learners, literacy and employment skills, and basic life skills

The Even Start program impacted the adults in the program regarding their perception of themselves and their education. The conclusions for this section primarily came from the graduate and parent participant interviews with the Gordon Personal Profile adding quantitative data.

1. Historically from the interviews an interesting finding reported that the majority of the parents interviewed stated they perceived they had been physically or emotionally abused in the elementary school setting by the third year of school when they were children. These forms of abuse included, but are not limited to, hitting, handslapping, name-calling, spanking, pinching, isolation and being yelled at. As they got older they felt negative about social and extracurricular activities as students. As Even Start participants these parent strongly supported the supportive learning environment created in the adult education classes and reported a positive attitude about themselves as learners.

2. Their self-esteem and manner in which they viewed themselves and their capabilities for the future were greatly enhanced through participation in the program.

3. All target participants and graduates reported an increase in their own reading and in reading in their families.

2. The target population overwhelmingly expressed the support that the program gave them in all areas of their lives - education, marriage, children, and employment.

3. 89% of the families selected the Even Start program to continue their education because of the inclusions of the whole family.

4. 93% of the adult participants who had attended other adult education programs stated that the Even Start Program was more beneficial due to the following reasons: attention to individuals, center work, "hands-on activities, relevance to family and everyday life, and cooperative learning.

5. 65% of the parents felt that journal writing had made a significant impact in their lives.

6. Participant interviews suggested that the participants considered themselves able to communicate more effectively with others in the community. Specifically, they sighted the following areas of communication strengthened: parent-teacher effectiveness, consumer advocacy, and cultural advocacy. These areas were functional as a means in themselves as well as the role model they served for the participants' children.

7. The effectiveness of life application skills was mentioned in 17 of 29 parent interviews: of these, 3 were sighted on exit interviews. Participants commented that adult education, home visits, play group, and parent discussion components integrated life application skills as well as strategies into daily programs.

8. After nine months in the program, parents self-esteem scores moved out of the low ranking.

9. 100% of the graduates had set goals to continue their own education.

Effects of the Even Start Program on adults' views of themselves as parents

The Caldwell Home Inventory, Parent Interviews, and Graduate Interviews were the evaluative measures chosen to examine changes in parenting of the program participants.

1. The results of the Caldwell Home Inventory suggested that the home environments of the target families had improved from the entry into the program to the time of the post-observation.

2. Parent interviews indicated that parents felt more confident in their parenting abilities. Parents reported that they now viewed themselves as capable of teaching their children and being more positive and supportive of their children. For example, parents stated they used less physical punishment now and instead used redirection, removal of privileges, and other logical consequences.

3. 75% of the parents reported they had learned the importance of reading to their children.

4. 100% of the graduates reported they have learned different skills for disciplining their children. 65% of the current participants stated they had learned better ways to discipline and guide their children.

4. 62% of the parents stated they had learned about developmentally appropriate games, toys and how to play with their children.

5. 96% of the parents felt the home visit provided new information on parenting tips, games and reading to their children.

6. Parents ranked the Early Learning Center as one of the most important component of the program with the Adult Education program ranked second in importance.

Early Childhood Education Component and Its Effects on Children

The Preschool Screening Inventory (PSI) and Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT), and Social-Literacy Interaction Scale were measures designated to measure the outcome of children's involvement in the program.

1. The PSI scores on the preschool children who were in the program nine months more than doubled.

2. The PPVT percentiles demonstrated a significantly higher increase compared to the national Even Start population.

3. The Literacy Scale results demonstrated increases in several areas: higher-order communication strategies, complex sentence structure, variety of language usage, and frequency of language initiations.

4. The increase in sophistication of play and the quality of interactions taking place with self and group-initiated play are demonstrated on the score changes in the Social Interaction Scale.

Longitudinal Effects of the Program on Preschool Graduates

1. Upon the completion of kindergarten only one preschool graduate had a weighted score on the Kindergarten Briggance Screening below 94.5.

2. Even Start preschool graduates were ranked higher by their teachers in a total ranking of academic performance, school success and parent participation. The mean ranking for the graduates was 52.66 and the control group's ranking was 44.92.

In summary, participants were empowered to transfer skills and strategies to all areas of their lives due to the integration across program components. The supportive infrastructure of the entire program allows participants to mentor each other in all program components: parents learn a great deal from each other during adult education, play group, and parent discussion. This not only allows participants to practice leadership roles and problem-solving, but gives all participants self-affirmation and allows them to fine-tune their communication strategies. Participants' improved view of themselves should conceivably contribute to their employability.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS:

According to the data reviewed, the Oklahoma City Even Start Family Literacy Program has been effective in meeting program goals for many participant families. There are several program areas that require further consideration.

Recommendations for Program Changes:

1. The graduates recommended that the Even Start program expand to offer the program to more parents.
2. Participants reported that they would like to integrate fathers further into the family program by offering frequent evening sessions on parenting, ESL and GED preparation classes.
3. Incorporate more life skills and cooperative learning into all phases of the course content of the parent education, adult education, and ESL classes.
4. Establish specific goals and objectives for the early childhood learning centers to meet the individual needs of the preschool children through class schedules, transitions, curriculum and daily lesson plans.

In conclusion, the data collected and reviewed by the ET concludes that the Oklahoma City Even Start Family Literacy Program has had positive effects for the participant families in the following areas: 1) home environment; 2) adults' attitudes and motivation for learning; 3) parenting skills; 4) children's social, language and literacy development; 5) school readiness; and 6) parents encouragement and involvement in children's education.

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